**2.5 Diversity in Hiring: a case study**

***Workshop leader****: Gunther Cornelissen (GC)*

***Presence****: GC and 6 participants (including note taker)*

* GC: We will discuss what does and does not work in hiring practices for diverse teams.
  + I will present an approach to visualize the impact of your hiring policy that can help to get clarity about what works and what does not.
  + Note that some of what I will show is quite specific and may be specific to the situation at my own institute/department.
  + We will play a bit with fake data, but you can also bring in your own cases.
  + But first, let’s do a round of introduction.
* Participant 1
  + I am a tenure track assistant professor.
  + I am interested in the processes that occurred when I was hired.
  + For the future, I want to know how I can make sure my own hiring is fair (e.g. of PhD candidates)?
* Participant 2
  + Coordinator operational management.
  + I help people with their hiring practices.
  + One of the issues I notice is that people are hiring their lookalikes. I would like advice on how to deal with that.
* Participant 3
  + I am the first non-Dutch employee in my team.
  + I would like to learn more about our hiring practices in the context of the international and diverse university.
* Participant 4
  + I am a journalist, working on a piece about the university workplace.
  + My intention is to be an outside observer for today’s session.
* Participant 5
  + I am an HR manager.
  + I have an interest in and work on diversity and inclusion initiatives.
  + I am interested in how we should deal with the uniform teams we often have now.
* Participant 6
  + PhD candidate.
  + Note taker.
* GC
  + What to do to increase diversity in hiring would have been interesting topic.
  + At the Mathematics department, when considering the gender dimension, we started with 5% women, and now have 30-35%.
  + Always try to see if an intervention has effect in the exact, targeted thing you’re trying to achieve.
  + I will talk about how we did it in our situation, which was a homogeneous situation to start with, and reminded me of the comic with five identical men sitting in a room saying: “gentleman, we need to diversify.”
  + Today we will try to work with a visualization tool/approach, with fake data.
  + The analysis approach applies to the evolution of proportions of minorities over time.
  + In terms of inclusion, I sometimes hear that once we have reached 30% people start asking the question: “now what do we do with it?”
    - Participant 5: that is very recognizable.
  + *[GC Shows diversity statistics in math department from 1995 onwards for gender.]*
  + The statistics shown are actual number of hires. Having the right statistics for your goal is important.
  + *[GC shows zoomed in figures of recent hires since 2015, tied to specific policies.]*
  + Westerdijk Fellowships were an example of a policy that had effect. These were vacancies for women only. This also raised the question: how do women react to women-only vacancies? The message was: people forget about it quite fast, so do not worry too much about it influencing your career.
  + One misconception we often see is that policy measures aiming to increase diversity lead to quality decline: “Yeah, it’s all nice, but the quality…”
* Participant 5
  + We use similar graphs, but we also use percentage graphs.
  + And we have diversity and inclusion, and implicit bias, trainings for hiring committees.
* GC
  + Regarding the Westerdijk Fellowships, hiring women only has now become a legal issue, and is in most cases not allowed in The Netherlands.
  + We then employed a separation strategy, where we separated men and non-men, ranked them independently, and then the top-ranked candidates in the minority group are all discussed, whereas in the majority group candidates are only discussed by acclaim.
  + This led to 80% of the interviewed candidates being female, and eventually a 50/50 split in our candidate shortlists. This policy worked well for us.
  + We combined it with other things, such as a bias training for the hiring committee as a group, to address your own and each other’s biases.
  + The task for you as a group is now to draw the diagrams that we used, but now based on fake data.
  + I prepared three different cases, you can choose one, and work in pairs to draw the diagram, plot the measures, and see if you see the effect of measures.
  + The three cases are:
    - **Admission to veterinary science**: generally more female than male students, with a shortage of large non-hippic farm animal vets. Men who worked on a farm during their youth would have more interest in this area, but often enter the university with lower high school grades and general abilities.
    - **Finance and control department**: a department with 40 employees, a lot of fluctuation with people leaving and being hired. There are mainly issues with diversity in cultural background, whereas gender and age are balanced.
    - **Department of geriatric sciences:** a university department with 60 employees. The department is in general quite diverse, but there is an age disbalance, with almost all employees being over 40. The department has concluded there is a need for rejuvenation.
* *[Participants now split into three duos that each discuss one of the cases for about 10 minutes. The participants use the graphical visualization approach as outlined by GC. Afterwards, each group reports back on their findings.]*
* Theme by theme discussion by the groups:
  + **Admission to veterinary science**: measures have been taken to increase male proportion in population, first years by draw about 80M-120F, after that more stringent selection, male fraction declined, interview selection reduced the fraction of males even further, and bias training for the hiring committee did not help. In 2014 a priority policy was introduced, but in 2015 it turned out it was illegal. Now the department is back to the same policy as the initial policy, but without the interview. They are also back to about 60M-140F.
  + GC: this is all based on fake data, but there is some truth to it as well, what we have seen happen with such interviews is that men can underperform, even when controlling for grade. So that’s why the interview approach was killed. Hard to disassociate societal effects, e.g. tv programs promoting male/female vets. And the priority selection that actually worked was illegal.
  + **Finance and control department**: they wanted to hire more people with a non-Dutch cultural background, they also did a bias training, which seemed to help for this case. The department also started to advertise internationally. At some point bias training was abolished and then there were no more non-Dutch hires. They then introduced the bias training again and made it mandatory to have one person with a non-Dutch background in the hiring committee, and the diversity in the team started to increase again.
  + GC: Also abolishing something (even if it had no effect initially) can have a negative signaling effect, and maybe even a spiraling effect.
  + **Department of geriatric sciences**: they wanted to encourage a younger population in the group. They started by introducing a policy in the hiring procedure to encourage younger people, first by taking into account how long people have been in the field, then by inviting shortlisted candidates to pay a visit to the department for a couple of days, but both did not work. Then junior colleagues received a role in the hiring procedure, which had some effect. The most pronounced effect came from offering junior candidates a higher starting salary. There can of course be other factors at play, but money seemed to be an important factor. Earlier steps also seemed reasonable at face value, but did not turn out to work.
  + GC: the geriatric department case is partially based on something we did at Mathematics, with inviting people to walk around at the department a bit, but this could actually also have a discouraging effect if it scares off juniors (or another minority).
  + GC: one disadvantage of this graphical analysis approach that we worked with today is that it is mainly suited to long-term data. If you want to know ahead of time if something will work, this approach may not be the best for you, and you may need to become aware of best practices at a quicker pace.
  + GC: we will now spend a bit of time reflecting on what happens **after** diverse hiring. I often hear the ‘but the quality…’ argument. When you hear such an argument, you can try to strike back with your own (quantitatively motivated) argument. For example, you can superimpose personal grants received by M/F on a plot. For us, the diverse team turned out to perform better on the ‘classical’ indicator of grants received. We should be aware, however, that people like NWO reviewers also have biases.
  + GC: we will finish today discussing the ‘anti-measure’ movement. We will split up into the same groups again, and now I want you to role play trying to invent reasons why you should be **against** taking any measures. Let’s do this in a safe way. Remember, it is all with fake data. But try to sneak into the brains of people that tend to give a negative message. Then we’ll discuss some policy measures that I have been involved with in the past.
  + [Groups take about 5 minutes to discuss reasons why you might not want to implement policy measures that have as a goal to increase the diversity in teams.]
  + GC: I will mention some of my favorite excuses for not trying to work towards more diverse teams. One example is: “things used to be easier when we all agreed.” I have even heard people use the ironically intended argument that if gender balance is so important “there should be more women in jail because the gender balance is unfair.” I have experienced a case where the member of a hiring committee stated that a non-male candidate had a worse publication record than a male candidate, but this turned out to objectively not be the case. And I’ve heard the following quote too: “She’s in it for the prestige, he’s in it for the science.”
  + GC: some of the things that we have done which could help you too, in a quick overview:
    - **prove the existence of good female scientists in your field**: increase visibility, actively search, encourage to apply for grants.
    - **select the best, unbiased**: cancel job opening if not enough females, discuss implicit bias, fix criteria, apply minority hiring, set higher goals (want 20%, aim 30%).
    - **aftercare**: diversity implies different opinions and potential for harassment.
  + GC: there are several ongoing issues that complicate the movement towards more diverse teams:
    - Old boys network, linear networking, gossip.
    - ‘Being spontaneous’ in hiring committees. Being spontaneous is fine, what is the problem is speaking without evidence.
    - (Craving for) harmony.
    - Pandora’s box unleashes frustration.